News Release
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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT PROVIDES ACCESS TO DIABETES PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR GUELPH AREA RESIDENTS

Guelph Family Health Team, Guelph Community Health Centre And North Wellington To Provide Diabetes Education

GUELPH - The McGuinty government is ensuring that diabetes patients in the Guelph area will continue to access much-needed care by introducing diabetes education programs through local community providers, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"We are building on our commitment to improve access to diabetes care for Guelph area residents by promoting comprehensive, community-based care," said Smitherman. "The diabetes teams at the new sites will keep these important services in the community so we can continue to meet the needs of patients by delivering effective education and management programs as close to home as possible."

Three diabetes teams will be funded to serve the city of Guelph and in North Wellington County, one diabetes team will maintain and enhance existing diabetes services. A consultant has been hired to work with key stakeholders in the county to develop a detailed implementation plan to meet the needs of residents.

The government is offering $789,194 in annual funding as follows:

- Guelph Community Health Centre - one diabetes education team - $190,323
- Guelph Family Health Teams – two diabetes education teams - $379,395
- North Wellington County - one diabetes education team - $219,476

"I am really pleased that Guelph-area residents will continue to receive diabetes education programs that deliver real results", said Liz Sandals, MPP for Guelph-Wellington. "It is great news that the Family Health Team will become the home for two of our diabetes support teams, thereby expanding access to comprehensive community care."

"We are thankful the government is placing high importance on diabetes education and treatment," said Kerry Bruder, Regional Director, Central South and Central West Ontario of the Canadian Diabetes Association. "People with diabetes will continue to have access to quality health care services."

Guelph General Hospital will continue its out-patient diabetes program for the next few months until the new diabetes model is operational.

A diabetes team consists of one registered nurse and one registered dietitian per team. The teams provide programs and services that focus on diabetes education, early intervention and effective prevention of diabetes-related complications.

Diabetes education and care is organized around self-management. The education is important in enhancing self-care and knowledge to prevent diabetes-related complications.

Diabetes is a serious chronic condition resulting from the body's inability to sufficiently produce and/or properly use insulin. Insulin, a hormone secreted from the beta cells in the pancreas, helps convert glucose into energy. Without insulin, glucose cannot be absorbed from the bloodstream into the cells of the body. High levels of blood glucose from diabetes can lead to long-term damage, dysfunction and failure of various organs. Diabetes can be self-managed through a balance of lifestyle and medication.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care currently funds the Northern Diabetes Health Network, the Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative, the Diabetes Complications Prevention Strategy, the Paediatric Diabetes Initiative and numerous diabetes education programs funded through global budgets of hospitals across Ontario. In 2007/08 the ministry will provide $55.6 million in total funding for diabetes programs.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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Media Contacts:

David Spencer
Minister's Office
416-327-4320

David Jensen
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
416-314-6197

Members of the general public: 1-866-532-3161

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